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ABSTRACT

This book takes the position that public schools can be saved if we can learn from history, discard ineffective methods and policies, and recognize the essential elements of quality education. Chapter 1 reviews reports that have portrayed a crisis in American public education. Chapter 2 examines disparities in public- and private-education costs. The third chapter examines education-reform movements, particularly the choice movement, and identifies the ingredients of effective education. The fourth chapter reviews the history of American public education, with a view to understanding today's school system. The legacy of racial discrimination is described in the fifth chapter. Chapter 6 considers American judicial landmark decisions and their effects on public education in the areas of bilingual and special education. Chapters 7 and 8 discuss court cases on school violence and public-school financing. Chapter 9 offers the following recommendations for improving American public schools: (1) return authority to the classroom teacher; (2) eliminate the segregation of class by age; (3) create magnet classrooms open to all children willing to abide a code of discrimination and conduct; and (4) eliminate teacher-certification programs and base teacher hiring on expertise. References accompany each chapter. (Contains 112 references.) (LMI)

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